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# Fear for defector's life prevents spy testimony

By Alice Siebert

Bonn correspondent

Chicago Tribune Press Service

BONN—West Germany's biggest spy catch of the decade has turned out to be almost useless — he can't testify against Communist spy suspects for fear he'll be killed.

When Werner Stiller, an assumed name, crossed the Berlin Wall in January, 1979, and began talking to West German intelligence officials, he was hailed as the most important defector in years.

However, perhaps a dozen or more of the 190 spy suspects Stiller named will escape unpunished because his information can't be used in court.

STILLER, AN officer of the main intelligence administration in East Berlin, gave the West information of the structure of the East German security apparatus and vast network of agents and informers it uses to silence critics.

His defection was considered a major blow to the highly effective East German intelligence service, which years earlier had managed to plant a spy in ex-Chancellor Willy Brandt's office.

Stiller was sentenced to death in absentia by an East German military court, and a special squad was sent to bring him back, dead or alive.

He underwent surgery on his face and vocal cords to change his appearance and voice. Through a slipup, newspapers reported that he had testified at a Dusseldorf spy trial. Further public testimony had to be ruled out to keep his new identity secret.

"IF HE SHOWS up in public his safety no longer is guaranteed," said Manfred Schueler, state secretary in the

chancellery. "He's in acute danger."

Kurt Rehmann, chief federal prosecutor, said, "When weighing the requirements of the state against the safety of the man, safety must have priority."

Stiller named about 100 persons in West German industry, scientific institutions, and political life who are believed to have worked for the East Germans. Several managed to get away before they were identified.

Stiller said the East Germans are saving hundreds of millions of marks annually through industrial espionage. The Soviet Union most likely benefits, too, because East Germany's intelligence agency cooperates closely with the KGB, the Soviet espionage service.

At present, 30 proceedings against spy suspects are pending, and some may have to be quashed unless the state is able to produce enough evidence without Stiller's testimony.

THE MOST prominent suspect is Friedrich Cremer, 59, a Social Democratic legislator in the Bavarian state assembly and mayor of Lengfurt. The prosecution is seeking a two-and-a-half year sentence for Cremer.

His defense attorney, former Interior Minister Hermann Hoecherl, argues that unless Stiller testifies at his trial in Munich and furnishes proof, Cremer must be acquitted.

However, an official of the chief prosecutor's office in Karlsruhe said if a witness is not available there still is the possibility of reading a deposition from Stiller in court.

Whatever happens to Cremer and the other suspects, it seems West German authorities are more concerned about saving Stiller from his pursuers than about the future of these trials.